

BIG CROWDS WATCH MANY THRILLING RESCUES

the roof and but three had gone back. Two watchmen, who were rescued, say there was at least eight other watchmen in various parts of the building who have not yet been accounted for.

At noon the fire had pretty well burned itself out. But business was practically suspended in the financial district.

ICE A FOOT THICK IN STREETS.
The general tie-up of the district was made complete when rivers of water flowing through the streets for blocks around froze to the depth of from two to twelve inches. Fire engines were frozen tight and could not be moved after the fire until their wheels were chopped loose. Water towers were slender monuments of ice frozen fast to the street. The walls of the buildings opposite the Equitable were ice cliffs.

Besides the thousands of employees who worked for the 500 tenants of the building, thousands of others made the general confusion the excuse for a holiday.

An instance of the general inconvenience was the predicament of the American Exchange National Bank, which was obliged by law to hold its annual meeting on the premises. The stockholders had to wade through six inches of water into the building at No. 425 Broadway, from which firemen were fighting the Equitable fire, and sat with their feet in water up to their ankles to hold their meeting. One feeble old director couldn't get to the building unaided and was carried in by a big policeman.

FIGHTING THE BLAZE A DIFFICULT PROBLEM.

From the practical view of the fire-fighter, the blaze was the most difficult problem New York's department has faced in many a year. Weather conditions made a bad situation worse. Back of this trouble was the stupidity of the employees of the building, who made a silly effort to control the fire themselves, and after it had been gaining on them for half an hour protested against the calling of firemen by the police.

When the fire was at its height, just before dawn, there was a sight for early risers along the Columbia Heights section in Brooklyn to be remembered a lifetime.

Against the dull purplish blue of the night, a monster forked tongue of flame, spitting sparks and embers and even blazing rafters, rose into the air for a quarter of a mile. Yellow at the core, it showed every hue of red and orange along its edges. The unearthly glare lighted, in fancifully shaded hues, the tall buildings which looked down on the seething furnace. Dore's imaginings of hell seemed like trifling guesses in the face of the awful reality, down in the canyon of business New York.

LACKED REALLY FIREPROOF PROTECTION.

The Equitable itself was not a high building. It rose to eight stories in some parts and to seven in others. It covered all the block except the northeast corner, which was occupied by William A. Read, banker and broker. While it was called fireproof then it lacked nearly all the protection which is now given office buildings. Lately there has been talk of replacing it with a skyscraper.

Chief Engineer Davis entered the building at a little after 4 o'clock to oversee the work of getting it ready for the day. At half past 4 o'clock he went to the timekeeper's room under the Pine street entrance, back of the elevators. A number of cleaners were lounging there, reading newspapers. One of them was leaning back against the partition of the storeroom of the Cafe Savarin. He sprang forward and rubbed his back.

"That wall is mighty hot," he said to Davis.

Davis laid his hand on the wall and clinched. It was as hot as a lighted stove. He ran to the door of the storeroom, opened it with his pass key and faced a room full of fire. He sounded the interior alarm of the building, and with a force of ten foremen, cleaners and porters turned a line of hose into the room.

POLICE WEREN'T TOLD FOR HALF AN HOUR.

The fire had been going for half an hour when a man ran out of Pine street to Broadway and told Policeman Foley there was a fire in the Equitable Building. Foley went down Pine street on the run, rapping the curb with his stick as he ran. Sergeant Casey met him, and the two entered the building.

As soon as Casey got a look into the burning storeroom he sent Foley out to ring a fire alarm.

"What are you fellows butting in for?" said one of the engineers, getting in front of Foley. "We can take care of this ourselves."

"Go on, Foley," commanded Casey. The policeman brushed the engineers aside and went. He had not reached the street when there was a rush and a roar and the fire burst through the partition into the elevator shaft and went whirling up to the fifth floor, where it spread out into the storeroom of the Lawyers' Club.

Deputy Chief Blinn, coming down Broadway ahead of the engines, took one look at the building when his car turned into Pine street and leaped straight at the fire box on the corner to call a second alarm.

Chief Kenlon was there three minutes after the second alarm. He did not bother with a third alarm but turned in a fourth. Later he turned in a fifth and then sounded an alarm at the Brooklyn end of the bridge which brought three battalions of Brooklyn firemen across to aid in the fight.

It was said today at fire headquarters that never before in the history of the department had a requisition been made on Brooklyn for fire apparatus.

BLAZE WORKED RAPIDLY THROUGH BUILDING.

A hurried survey of the building convinced Chief Kenlon that it could not be saved. From the Lawyers' Club and its dining room the fire worked east to Nassau street, then north and back to Broadway again. At 5:15 o'clock the three upper floors of the building were all a mass of fire.

Before a stiff westerly gale, which swept across the building through Trinity Churchyard, a storm of burning embers was being scattered over all the buildings to the east of Nassau street. Chief Kenlon had his men take to the roofs of every building between Nassau and Pearl streets, after warning janitors and caretakers to keep all windows closed. He estimated there was \$90,000,000 worth of property within the danger zone.

A water tower was raised in Pine street and hurled a stream consolidated from three hydrants into the Lawyers' Club windows. The standpipes of the Schermerhorn Building on the south, the Fourth National Bank on Nassau street, the Chase National Bank on Cedar street, and the Trinity Building on Broadway were all commandeered by the firemen who shot ineffectual streams into the cauldron. All they hoped to do was to keep the fire from getting any hotter and from blazing up more dangerously. Floor rafters, heavy chairs, whole window frames, tables, burning like bits of paper, went whirling up into the sky until the section of the burning gas released them to fall to the roofs of the streets below.

GREAT CHIPS OF STONE FALL TO STREET.

Wherever water struck great chips of stone, some of them as big as a man's head, bounced off and rained into the street. The wind became fiercer and fiercer, and, whipping around the edges of the Trinity Building, often broke the force of even the mighty standpipe streams and threw them down to Broadway to make the sidewalks and the street surface a glare of ice.

The horses of the department had a frightful time. They arrived in a wild state of uneasiness. Plain show, they had most of them fallen many times on the ice-coated streets. The great chunks of falling wood, all sorts, and the constant rattle of broken stone, threw them into a panic. There were constant runaways. As fast as an engine had been wheeled and wrenched into place the horses were unhitched and taken to quieter streets.

In front of Benedict's jewelry store two horsecars, in a runaway, had locked wheels on the sidewalk. A top of them was a Battalion Chief's wagon. The horses were roaming around wild in Broadway.

Deputy Chief Walsh went up inside the building while the fire was

Fire Chief Kenlon Clad in Ice; Chaplain Who Ministered to Hurt



REMOVED THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN WASTEBASKETS THROUGH STREETS.

A slight of the fire was a procession of clerks and officers of the Equitable Trust Company, flanked by armed guards, taking money in bundles and boxes and boxes in wastebaskets from the offices of the Equitable Trust Company, at Pine and Nassau streets, to safety.

Mark Snowden, an elderly man, of No. 115 Oak street, Brooklyn, was knocked down by the burning of a hose line at Maiden lane and Nassau street. His leg was broken and he was removed to Hudson Street Hospital. Several other men were knocked down and burned.

still confined to the upper floors. Smoke made it almost impossible for any of the men with him to accomplish anything. He ordered them out. When they reached the street he was missing. They rushed back, but even in so short a time the fire had dropped down three stories, and the big inner rotunda was too hot for safety.

THREE MEN PERCHED ON ROOF.

Onlookers broke through the police lines at Cedar street and ran to Deputy Chief Devaney. They caught him by the arms and pointed up to the roof over the window arches. There were three men. Their mouths were open as though they were screaming. Long streams of flame were spouting from the windows right under them. Only the broad, curved stone on which they perched kept them from burning.

"Let Truck No. 1 go after them," said Devaney. "Call for volunteers."

Lieut. Humphries, who had been cut on the back of the leg by a piece of stone earlier in the morning, had been stitched up by Surgeon Jarrett of Hudson Street Hospital and ordered home, ran limping to his company, which was stationed east of Nassau street, and lined up his men.

"Who wants this job?" he asked. "Step out for volunteer duty." The whole company of nine men jumped forward together. With the men straining at the wheels to help the terrified horses, the extension ladder truck was wheeled up under the place where the doomed men were. By this time they were visibly prying and crossing themselves.

Meanwhile Devaney sent men to the roof of the building across the street with a coil of rope. It was thrown across the gap and one of the men caught it. Hardly had his hands closed on it when a spray of flame from below cut it like a knife.

With a terrific report somewhere about the third floor, the roof went in. The stone coping on which the men stood shook. One of them plunged down after the falling flames. The other two fell to the street and were unrecognizable when firemen ran out and dragged them to the other sidewalk.

One of them struck the long, slight ladder, wavering under the weight of three men who were being raised to the coping, and it was very nearly knocked over. The men had to cling to it for their lives.

LIVED SHORT TIME AFTER FALL.

The third man who fell was later found at the opening of the alley between the Read building and the Equitable building on Pine street. A fireman carried him to a place of comparative safety under an arch and reported to Chief Blinn. The man died in an ambulance which was taking him to St. George's Hospital. His skull had been fractured. A card in his pocket caused the police to believe he was Massina Pratta, a cleaner in the restaurant.

At a little after dawn firemen huddled in the entrance of the Trinity Building heard a scream from the Equitable Trust Company on the first floor. The men, all of them, rushed across the street, during the tottering wall and the rain of hot stone.

The yells came from a small sidewalk opening. The firemen chopped a hole through the sidewalk window of the vault. Deputy Chief Devaney went to them and ordered them back to the other side of the street. His orders had not the slightest influence with the men. He might as well have talked to the fire itself.

They pulled Frank W. Peck of No. 824 Columbus avenue out of the hole. He was nearly dead from suffocation and the icy chill of the water in which he had been floundering. He told them there was another man somewhere in the muck. A fireman dropped through the hole and groping around found and brought out Fred Peterson, who was unconscious. After Peterson and his rescuer had been lifted out things were getting too hot even for the brave fire fighters.

But horse cries still arose. One fireman stayed just long enough to put down an axe, which was grasped by a hand below. He had intended to haul the man to the surface, but the axe was twisted out of his hand. Then the stone shower drove him away.

CHOPPED WAY OUT WITH FIREMAN'S AXE.

A little later a negro, Lee Pitt, came out of the Cedar street entrance of the building. He had the axe in his hand. He said he had chopped his way out with it. It was felt that he took word to the firemen that President Gilbin, who had rushed down to his office from his home in Seventy-second street, was still in the building. The story of the heroic rescue of Gilbin and two other men from the vaults is told elsewhere.

At a little after noon the big safe in the banking house of Kountze & Co. broke through the floor of the second story and crashed down into the offices of the Mercantile Safe Deposit Company, where the fire was burning fiercely. Ten streets were at once brought to bear on the safe to keep it from melting and also to protect the safe deposit vaults.

It was 8 o'clock when the Brooklyn engines came clanging over the bridge and went pounding down into the smoke pall which filled Nassau street. Deputy Chief Kelly, at the head of this column of nine engines and two trucks, took charge of the Nassau street side of the building. He reported that he would be able to save the Belmont Building, including the Equitable.

He added that if he succeeded it would be against the utmost efforts of an old woman floor scrubber, who had run back after the police had put her out. She insisted on running through the building throwing windows

open and greatly increasing the danger. The magnificent offices of August Belmont were drenched with water and must be entirely refurbished.

FIREMEN INJURED IN MANY WAYS.

William Brown and Peter Donovan, on the Nassau street side, fell down the ice-coated step of a building opposite. Brown's right arm was broken. Donovan had a bad scalp cut and his thigh was badly bruised.

An ice splinter cut a long gash across the face of Samuel Diamond of Engine No. 17. Patrick Healy of the same company suffered the same injury.

John Roth of Engine No. 32 fell from a slippery window ledge two stories up. His leg was broken, his back injured and his head was cut. All these were taken to St. Gregory's Hospital by Dr. Savage.

Charles Bass, Captain of Engine No. 24, was taken to Hudson Street Hospital badly cut and burned after a fall into the ruins.

Even before dawn a crowd of almost incredible size had gathered in the streets as near as the police would permit. Inspector Caballane sent requisitions to Headquarters for reserves from all over the city. There were 300 policemen on special duty when his orders had been carried out. There was little business done in the financial district.

Bankers and brokers and lawyers devoted themselves to trying to help the sufferings of the firemen. Hurry orders were sent to restaurants for coffee and sandwiches by the wagon load. Cups and saucers were bought outright, with no promise of their return.

Men of millions jollied their way past policemen, rounded up a band of cut and shivering firemen and marched them off to warm them up. The banking office of Raymond and Pynchon was an emergency warming station for relays of twenty-five men, waited upon by sympathetic stenographer girls all morning.

EQUITABLE RECORDS SAFE; NEW OFFICES ARE ESTABLISHED

President Says Business Will Be Carried On in City Investing Building.

President William A. Day of the Equitable Assurance Society issued the following statement just before noon:

"The burning of the home office building of the society at No. 120 Broadway will cause but temporary inconvenience in the transaction of our business."

"The securities and important records were protected by fireproof vaults which are intact. Most of the office force and records were removed some time ago to the society's new building at No. 2 Albany street."

"The executive offices of the society and the cashier's department have been established in the City Investing Building at No. 162 Broadway. The society will occupy the second, third and fourth floors there. This will, for the time being, be the home office of the society. All business with the public will be transacted there, including the receipt of premium payments."

Real estate experts say the destruction of the building enhances the value of the ground, because it was unsuitable except as the site of a new building, and the cost of razing it would be great. It is understood that the Equitable will at once erect a building to rival the Metropolitan, Singer and Woolworth Buildings.

CHIEF WALSH KILLED

(Continued from First Page.)

he was made an instructor in the Fire College.

Walsh first appeared on the roll of honor for distinguished bravery in July, 1905. Again he was placed on the roll in March, 1909.

In June, 1911, fifteen firemen in the cellar of a burning building at No. 57 West street were overcome by gas. They were under command of Chief Walsh, and he was also overcome.

But in failing he struck his head against a protruding iron nail. The shock revived him sufficiently to enable him to crawl along the floor to the cellar stairway. He worked his way half way up the steps, wrapped his arms around a line of hose and hung there until firemen dragged him out. Then he told of the condition of the men in the cellar and they were rescued just in time.

Three months ago Chief Walsh fell twenty-five feet into an airtight in a burning building at No. 81 Duane street. There was a lot of water at the bottom of the well. He supported himself by hanging to the top of a hot iron shutter for ten minutes while firemen were arranging to rescue him. The flames of his right hand were burned to the bone.

Walsh's home was at No. 113 Forty-second street, Brooklyn. He was married.

WIDOW OF CHIEF AND HIS DAUGHTER SEARCH FOR HIM.

Mrs. Walsh, the widow, and her thirteen-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, arrived at the scene of the fire shortly after 1 o'clock. A rumor of her husband's death had reached her in her Brooklyn home. She had called up her brother, Capt. Mitchell, U. S. A., retired, who is employed in the Brooklyn Register's office, and he had consulted Chief Kenlon. Mrs. Walsh could not bear the suspense of waiting to hear from her brother and hurried to the scene.

The first fireman she met was Walter Faust, her husband's driver. Faust had been searching frantically for his chief for three hours. When Mrs. Walsh questioned him, he could not speak. As he turned from her she became hysterical and fainted. In the arms of Fire Commissioner Johnson, when she revived Commissioner Johnson put her and her daughter into a taxi and sent them home.

Flood Threatens Paris.

PARIS, Jan. 9.—A repetition of the great flood of 1910 is believed to be imminent here today following rapid rise in the Seine. A heavy rain has been falling for more than twenty-four hours and the authorities have warned merchants in the Port de Bercy to evacuate at once. The lower quays are inundated for the entire length of the city.

Rare Volumes Lost When Lawyers' Library Burns

The destruction of the gorgeous home of the Lawyers' Club and its priceless library of more than 20,000 volumes removes, temporarily at least, one of the city's most famous institutions. The law library was probably the finest in America, and included the famous library of Benjamin F. Butler, who was Attorney General of the United States under Presidents Jackson and Van Buren.

This collection and many famous first editions can never be replaced, and, besides, there was a valuable collection of documents, autographs and letters that has been accumulating in the archives of the club since its organization in 1857. As for the 20,000 standard works, they cannot be duplicated for less than \$100,000.

The law library was on the top floor of the building, reached by tiny elevators and through cloister-like corridors. The fire found its way into the slim flues of the narrow elevator wells and shot up them in yeasers of flame, flooding the corridors and sweeping through the great library room, which was soon transformed into a seething furnace.

The magnificent dining-room of the club was on the fifth floor of the Equitable Building, and for the last twenty years it has been the most famous dining place in downtown New York, unique in its kind and the gathering place of the most noted lawyers of the New York bar.

The dining-room occupied the entire Nassau street wing, was eighty feet deep and forty feet wide. The walls and ceilings were decorated in white and gilt with artistic ornamentation. On the walls were hung many valuable paintings.

The paintings had been given the club by its members from time to time. No expense was spared in the ornamentation and decorations of the dining-room. The prevailing style was massive elegance. There were two great circles of electric lights in the domed ceiling that gave the effect of shaded clouds, shedding a soft yet brilliant radiance. There was a magnificent grate, surrounded by large slabs of onyx and surmounted by a beautiful tapestry. The flooring of the room was of oak, laid in "herring-bone" pattern. The side walls were lined with large mirrors.

The gilded ceiling of the dining room was supported by fluted and carved onyx columns. The side windows were of the cathedral pattern, of stained glass.

But this sumptuous dining room was only one of many splendid apartments. There was the white and gold cafe adjoining the dining room, the Oriental smoking and reading rooms and ante-rooms of palatial richness; then there was a sumptuous hall, with Carrara marble walls and marble floor, resplendent with dainty arc lights, which alone cost \$50,000. On the sixth floor there were two general dining rooms, on the grill room pattern, less lavish in decoration, and attached to these apartments was a richly equipped reception room for ladies, who were frequent guests of the club members at luncheon and dinner. On the fourth floor the club had barber shops and baths for the exclusive use of members.

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